

## **EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **Minutes September 5, 2006**

The regular meeting of the Edgefield County Council was held Tuesday, September 5, 2006, in the County Council Chambers, 225 Jeter Street, Edgefield, SC.

#### **Members present:**

C. Monroe Kneece, Chairman  
Willie C. Bright, Vice Chairman  
Norman Dorn, Councilman  
Joel D. Hudson, Councilman  
B. Everette Kitchens, Councilman

#### **Others present:**

Wayne Adams, County Administrator  
Lynn W. Strom, Finance/Budget Director  
John Byrd, County Attorney  
Barbara R. Stark, Clerk to Council

Chairman Kneece called the meeting to order and Councilman Hudson gave the invocation. The Pledge of Allegiance was then recited.

#### **Minutes**

Motion was made by Councilman Bright, seconded by Councilman Hudson, to approve the Minutes of the August 8, 2006, Regular Meeting of the Edgefield County Council. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Councilman Kitchens, seconded by Councilman Hudson, to approve the Minutes of the August 24, 2006, Called Edgefield County Council Meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **Reports**

Councilman Kitchens brought to council members' attention Report III of letters received from EC Chamber of Commerce and Women in Unity, each thanking council for their monetary support.

Also Report IV was mentioned, that being the \$300,000 state funding for the restoration of the Biddle Hall Museum Annex at the Bettis Academy Campus.

#### **Public Hearing**

A public hearing was scheduled to be held for public comments on Ordinance No. 05-06-581, "An Ordinance Amending Ordinance No. 05-06-579, the General Operating and Ancillary Budgets for FY 06-07, to Provide for Reassessment Revenues." Inadvertently a motion was made to accept this ordinance as second reading instead of receiving

## **EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **Minutes**

**September 5, 2006**

comments from the public. A public hearing will be held on this ordinance at council's regular meeting in October.

### **Ordinances**

Councilman Bright made the motion to approve third and final reading on Ordinance No. 05-06-580, "An Ordinance to Adopt and Implement Values for Property Taxation Purposes Established by the County Assessor and the S. C. Department of Revenue Based Upon the December 31, 2005, Valuation Date for Property Tax Year 2006." The motion was seconded by Councilman Hudson and carried unanimously.

Motion to approve second reading of Ordinance No. 06-07-581, "An Ordinance Amending Ordinance No. 05-06-579, "The General Operating and Ancillary Budgets for FY 06-07, to Provide for Reassessment Revenues" was made by Councilman Bright, seconded by Councilman Hudson. Motion was made by Councilman Bright, seconded by Councilman Hudson to approve Ordinance No. 06-07, 581 as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

The vote taken by council on Ordinance No. 05-06-581 did not include the following spending requests made by individual department heads. Several department heads were in attendance to address council concerning increases to the FY 2006-07 Budget concerning their departments.

Jewel Plaxco, EMS Director addressed council concerning salary increases due to creating competitive salary ranges. She stated that EMS is having a problem keeping employees due to the salaries. Ms. Plaxco asked for council's consideration in adjusting salaries for EMS employees to be competitive with other counties. Comparison was made to other counties with Saluda being the highest paid and Greenwood the lowest. Other counties in comparison to Edgefield are Aiken, McCormick, Lexington, Abbeville and Laurens.

The Administrator asked to allow the staff to run some numbers throwing out the highest and lowest comparisons (Greenwood the low – Saluda the high) and come to a number making Edgefield County competitive but not as expensive. Do not compare based all on size because the labor market has to be considered. We compete with Aiken and Lexington. Because EMS personnel make fewer trips and work longer hours when they come the commute is not that big of a deal for them. So, they will drive a long way for a better salary.

Motion was made by Councilman Dorn, seconded by Councilman Hudson, to have the staff work on the salary increase for EMS and bring back to council. Motion carried unanimously.

## **EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **Minutes**

**September 5, 2006**

#### **Tricia Glenn / Archives**

Ms. Glenn asked for the reinstatement of the part-time position for the Archive department at a total cost of \$2,897 (includes payroll taxes and retirement system); microfilm cabinet at a cost of \$1,500 and a telephone that corresponds with the other telephones in the county at a cost of approximately \$300.00. Total request \$4,697.00.

The part-time position was deleted from the budget and Ms. Glenn has no one to fill in for her when she has to be away from the office. Tricia stated that to train someone would take quite a while.

The microfilm cabinet is needed because there is no storage left for microfilm that are now in boxes on the floor of the Archives and more are to come making a total of over 200 boxes of microfilm and no place to store them. The \$1,500 includes the cabinet, delivery and set-up.

The telephone in Ms. Glenn's office does not correspond with other county telephones. She cannot transfer calls to other county telephones nor can anyone transfer a call to her office.

Motion was made by Councilman Bright, seconded by Councilman Dorn to allow the purchase of a microfilm cabinet at the price of \$1,500.00 and a telephone. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Councilman Hudson, seconded by Councilman Dorn, to reinstate the Archives part-time position at \$2,897.00. Motion carried with four yeas and one nay by Councilman Kitchens. Mr. Hudson stated that the next administrator should have someone trained for the Archives department.

#### **Emergency Preparedness**

Mike Casey, Emergency Preparedness updated the council on the pandemic flu issue. A tabletop exercise has been held and passed. Four meetings have been held with DHEC and have trained teams to go out and make presentations to the community on pandemic flu. All of the department heads have participated in at least one of the meetings and they, hopefully, have a strategy in place should the pandemic flu hit and that particular department would be crippled for manpower. DHEC has stated that should the flu strike the county we could have as much as 40% absenteeism because of the employee's illness, family members, or death.

With the remainder of the Homeland Security money for 2005, Mike stated that he could purchase a 55KW diesel generator for the ambulance service (100% federal money, did not cost the county anything but a small building to store the generator). The agreement between EMS and EMA is that Emergency Preparedness will use EMS base as an

## **EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **Minutes**

**September 5, 2006**

alternative site should the regular operations site (chambers) fail or if for some reason EMA needs to be a EMS.

The next request of Mike was an equipped emergency/disaster relief trailer. This would hold any item (bandaging material, suits, de-contamination tents, etc) needed during a disaster. It could be used as a distribution point and/or during a mass casualty situation if Emergency Preparedness had to be a supported arm of EMS or Law Enforcement. A trailer could have been used a few months ago during the Milliken fire. It would be a self-contained trailer.

A good used trailer has been located at which is considered a good price (\$8,000). Mr. Casey asked council for its consideration to transfer to the Emergency Preparedness account, a line item (little over \$8,000) in the county's budget that is medical related and has not been exercised in several years and will not be used for its original intended purpose. These funds would be used to purchase this trailer. EMS, Red Cross and the hospital have all agreed to partner with Mike either with manpower, goods/material in order to equip the trailer. They can acquire things through their grants that he cannot. EMS has agreed to park the trailer at their building – a central location for easy assess-ibility.

Motion was made by Councilman Kneece, seconded by Councilman Hudson, to approve the transfer of \$8,000 from line item 001-001-01000-00016 to the General Fund in order to purchase a trailer to be used during a disaster/mass casualty situation. Motion carried unanimously.

Mike next informed council that within the last several years Emergency Preparedness has been approached by the Federal Government to participate in CERT (Community Emergency Response Training program. This is a 100% funded program through the federal government. In the past they (federal government) have offered to give us approximately \$2,000 to participate. Consensus of EMS, the administrator and himself, Mike stated they just did not feel it was worth the time and effort. This year \$10,000 was offered. The money would be used to train emergency response teams that would be located in respective areas of the county – maybe the fire districts. This would be low-level training – not EMT or paramedic training – just some type of trained medical help that could be on the scene until an ambulance could arrive.

Some of the CERT funds could be used to pay a secretary (a helper person, a worker, whatever term) while they are helping to administer the CERT program. Since 911 the part time EMA position has taken on a different life. There are other grants available for many things that we could use but there isn't the time to do justice to acquiring these grants. He emphasized he really needs some help. This is an opportunity to have a part time person to help keep up with CERT – everything that has to be done to

## **EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **Minutes**

**September 5, 2006**

monitor CERT. This particular person would be paid by the county and the county reimbursed – the same way Mike's salary is handled-. The position would last as long as the grant lasts. As soon as the grant goes away, the job goes away.

Motion was made by Chairman Kneece to pursue the grant. The motion was seconded by Councilman Hudson and the motion carried unanimously.

The last concern addressed by Mr. Casey was the discussion of the distribution of funds for the fire departments – fire services in general. Several years ago Edgefield County began a Fire Board consisting of a member of each of the seven fire departments. Mike, along with some fireman, went to Saluda County and made a presentation to them.

Saluda County adopted a fire board and they have gone a step further. There is now a Saluda County Service. The fire departments, both city and rural there, are directly under the control of Saluda County Government via the Emergency Preparedness Director, Robert Steadman. What this means is that the fire departments are able to get additional bonuses (initial goods or services in lieu of dollars) to help their fire departments grow. The county has a greater opportunity to determine where the funds are spent and how they are spent. There is a greater accountability by the fire departments of the county funds disbursed to them.

Mike would like to see council explore the fire service concept. He feels this might be a logical next step for Edgefield County to look into this. The accountability factor is very important. This could be an opportunity to fine tune our fire departments even more so. A fire grant would be easier to obtain as a joint venture, rather than each department going it alone.

The fire service is basically all of the fire departments subscribing to a basic concept. Items such as insurance, etc. are in bulk rather than each fire department on a separate basis. Insurance is obtained on a contract basis in order to save each department some money.

All of this is just information. Not advocating any changes, stated Mr. Casey.

Consensus of council was to have Mr. Casey look into this further and bring the information back to council.

### **Sheriff**

Ms. Polly Hall and Ms. Karen Jagers addressed council in the absence of Sheriff Dobey. The sheriff's requests totaled \$17,579.00.

The requests included an increase for the sheriff's department in the travel budget of

## **EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **Minutes**

**September 5, 2006**

\$400; mandated physicals for all deputies (\$2,250); file cabinet and bookcase (\$450); cameras, practice rounds and targets, digitalized video collection system, spray, holsters, inserts (\$6,879)/ computer for road patrol (\$1,000). Total of \$10,979.00.

Increase for dispatch in printing and office supply budget (\$500); traveling expenses (\$500); boarding and lodging (\$500); employee training (\$500) physicals for dispatchers (\$750). Total \$2,750.00.

Jail increase in printing and office supply budget (\$700); medical supply budget (\$500); employee training (\$200); physicals for all jailors (\$1,650). Eliminate specialized departments (\$500). Total \$2,550.00.

Jail Building increase of small hand tools (\$300); refrigerator and push lawn mower (\$1,000). Total \$1,300.00.

Motion was made by Councilman Kitchens, seconded by Councilman Dorn, to approve the Sheriff's request totaling \$17,579.00. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **Treasurer's request**

At this point the Chairman recognized Ms. Arlene Traxler, Edgefield County Treasurer. She addressed Council concerning the request to offer Edgefield County Taxpayers the opportunity to pay property taxes by credit card at the walk-up window in the Treasurers Office, of which she has had many requests for this type of payment.

Taxes can be paid via the internet with a nominal charge which is retained by the servicing company at no cost to the county. There is a cost to the county for walk-in service but the question is how to re-coup these costs. There will be a 2.5% fee to those taxpayers wishing to utilize this service in addition to their credit card charge. They will be notified of this fee up front.

There is an up-front cost of \$500.00 for the machine and a one-time set-up fee of \$50.00, which is not in her budget. Those credit card fees will be put into a fund balance account to cover those costs. Each taxpayer will be charged 1.87% of whatever the tax bill is, plus \$.20 per item that the bank charges. Those costs of 2.5% should cover those costs. The Treasurer stated that an invoice will be received at the end of each month and those fees that have been retained will go towards paying that.

Because there is an up-front cost (to the county) she asked Council for approval to offer this service to the taxpayer. Ms. Traxler said that she did not feel that the entire county should absorb those costs so that is why each individual would have that charge. She feels because of reassessment this would be a good time to offer this service and that it would help with the collections and help reduce delinquencies that roll over to the

## **EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **Minutes September 5, 2006**

delinquent tax collector.

An analog phone line will have to be installed. A price isn't known at the present time.

Currently when a taxpayer uses the credit card payment, the fee that the internet service provider charges goes directly to the taxpayer. The county does not keep any of that.

Ms. Traxler stated she would like to be able to offer this service to the taxpayers but she needed the support of council to be able to offer this service and also council's consideration of \$550.00 for the upfront costs because she does not have this in her budget. The fees collected for this service will be returned to the general operating fund.

Chairman Kneece made the motion to approve the \$550 upfront costs for the installation of the credit card machine for walk-in taxpayers, seconded by Councilman Bright. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **Letter of resignation**

The chairman read a letter of resignation from Dr. George L. Rainsford. Dr. Rainsford served as the medical control officer with Edgefield County EMS for 25 years. He thanked County Council, Administrator Wayne Adams and EMS Director Jewel Plaxco for their support throughout his years of service. Dr. Tami Massey has agreed to accept this position and she is certified as medical control. Chairman Kneece made a motion, seconded by Councilman Hudson to present Dr. Rainsford with a plaque for his years of service. Motion carried unanimously.

#### **Ordinances**

Second reading of Ordinance No. 06-07-582, "An Ordinance Authorizing Edgefield County, SC, to Enter into a Lease/Purchase Transaction Relating to the Financing of An Ambulance and Related Equipment and Other Equipment Including But Not Limited to a Truck; Authorizing the Execution and Delivery of An Equipment Lease/Purchase Agreement in An Amount Not to Exceed \$180,000; and Other Matters Relating Thereto" was approved by a motion made by Councilman Bright, seconded by Councilman Kitchens. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Councilman Kitchens, seconded by Councilman Bright, to approve first reading of Ordinance No. 06-07-583, "An Ordinance Amending the Edgefield County Zoning Map to Change the Zoning Designation of Tax Map #137-00-00-012 From Residential-Agricultural Development (RD) to General Agricultural Development (GD)." Motion carried unanimously.

Prior to the first reading of Ordinance No. 06-07-584, the Administrator introduced Edward Kluiters with the law firm of Haynsworth Sinkler Boyd in Columbia. He

## **EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **Minutes**

**September 5, 2006**

addressed Council concerning the ordinance. “This is an ordinance and also a resolution that follows the ordinance on the agenda that authorizes a fee-in-lieu of taxes for Southern Felt. They are contemplating an expansion of their investment in the county (Hwy. 25 south). The expansion will be approximately 5.3 million dollars and this incentive would help them with their property taxes- lower the rate from 10.5 to 6% and it would lock in the millage rate for five years. After five years it would be locked in for another five years based on the average for the previous years.

Motion was made by Councilman Kitchens, seconded by Councilman Hudson, to approve first reading of Ordinance No. 06-07-584, “An Ordinance Authorizing the Execution and Delivery of a Fee-In-Lieu of Tax Agreement By and Between Edgefield County, South Carolina, and Southern Felt Company, Inc., With Respect to Certain Economic Development Property, Whereby Such Property Will Be Subject to Certain Payments in Lieu of Taxes and Other Matters Related Thereto.” Motion carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Councilman Kitchens, seconded by Councilman Bright, to approve Ordinance No. 06-07-585, “An Ordinance to Authorize the Second Multi-County Park Amendment the Agreement for Development of a Joint County Industrial and Business Park Dated as of December 31, 1996, Between Edgefield County, South Carolina and Aiken County, South Carolina (“Aiken County”) to Include Additional Property in Aiken County as Part of the Joint County Industrial and Business Park.” Motion carried unanimously.

### **Resolutions**

Motion was made by Councilman Hudson, seconded by Councilman Bright, to approve Resolution No. 06-07-291, “A Resolution Authorizing a Fee in Lieu of Taxes Agreement with Southern Felt Company, Inc. so as to Induce Southern Felt Company, Inc to Make Additional Investments in the County.” Motion carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Councilman Bright, seconded by Councilman Hudson, to approve Resolution No. 06-07-292, “A Resolution Providing for an Intergovernmental Agreement Between Edgefield and McCormick Counties, Whereby the Two Counties will Jointly Utilize Edgefield County’s Convenience Center Located at the Intersection US Highway 378 and S-19-67. Motion carried unanimously. The annual payment to Edgefield County has increased \$135.00.

### **New Business**

#### **Heating/Air Conditioning/County Buildings**

The following bids for the maintenance of heating and air conditioning for county buildings were considered by Council:



**EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**Minutes**  
**September 5, 2006**

(1)	Sub Zero Air, Inc.	Brooklyn, NY	\$52,633.24
(2)	Holsonback Services	Johnston, SC	\$10,538.00
(3)	York-Johnson Control	Columbia, SC	\$ 9,002.00
(4)	Cullum Elect. & Mec.	Greenwood, SC	\$ 8,875.00

Motion was made by Councilman Hudson, seconded by Councilman Dorn, to accept the bid of \$8,875 submitted by Cullum Electric & Mechanical, Inc. of Greenwood, SC. Motion carried unanimously. This contract is effective September 6<sup>th</sup> for one year with the option to renew for one year.

**PARD/FY 2007**

Motion was made by Councilman Dorn, seconded by Councilman Kitchens, to approve the PARD funding distribution for FY 2007 using the formula presented. Motion carried unanimously.

**Town of Edgefield/Appropriation**

Consensus of Council to approve the recreation appropriation request of \$7,500 from the Town of Edgefield.

**Murrah Road Ext**

The consideration by Council of a deed swap between Tim Campbell (Murrah Road Ext.) and the County of Edgefield. The County was given a piece of property to construct a road and the road was constructed partially on another piece of property. We are swapping property to perfect the deed. Councilman Hudson made the motion, seconded by Councilman Dorn, to accept the deed swap perfecting the right-of-way for Murrah Road Ext. Motion carried unanimously.

**Old Business**

The Administrator updated Council on the status of current projects, one being the property tax reassessment which was just given third reading at this meeting. The assessed value notices are to go out by September 19<sup>th</sup> and the property owners will then have until December 19<sup>th</sup> to appeal those values. For any appeals that are not settled by December 31<sup>st</sup>, the taxpayer will be billed on 80% of the new amount.

The Council earlier addressed the EMS issue and as far as cash flow monitoring, in the fall before the tax notices are mailed that is when the county's cash reserves are at the lowest. This is a natural consequence of the income and expenditure cycles that results from the beginning of the expenditures on July 1 and collecting the most of the property taxes in December and January. That is state law and that isn't anything the county can change. Cash needs to be monitored between now and when the tax notices go out and avoid large ticket expenditures.

## **EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL**

### **Minutes**

**September 5, 2006**

The Bettis Park Capital Project is about two-thirds of the way done - \$110,000 unencumbered left there; five road projects in the process: Townes Road, Sawyer Avenue, Padgett Road, Cooper's Loop and Scenic Drive; Courthouse Security Planning is awaiting the Chief Justice's committee to tell us what they want us to do in terms of the scope; heavy equipment lease/purchase.

Included in the administrator's written report to council was some general information on property tax law changes and how they are going to **affect** service expansion in the next few years.

Mr. Adams praised the department heads (appointed and elected). Edgefield County Government is fortunate to have a high level of department-level leadership.

#### **County Administrator Position**

Motion was made by Councilman Hudson, seconded by Councilman Dorn, to advertise for the position of county administrator beginning September 10<sup>th</sup>. Motion carried unanimously. Applications will be taken through September 22<sup>nd</sup>. Upper Savannah will handle the advertising and will receive all applications. They will screen the applications and send the top ten to fifteen (applications) to council for review.

#### **Old Business**

Councilman Dorn asked for an update on the bridge between Edgefield and Saluda Counties (a school bus route). Mr. Adams stated that he had spoken with the school bus superintendent several months ago and it was suggested some fix to the problem. The concern is the tonnage that is being taken across the bridge. A loaded school bus is about 30 tons and to fortify the bridge to that level would be very expensive. It is a question whether council wants to expend resources for that purpose. If so, an engineer would have to draw up some specifications. It was Councilman Dorn's understanding from past discussions that the bridge could be dismantled and some other type of crossing arranged.

#### **No guests; no comments from the public; no executive session.**

At this time Chairman Kneece presented a plaque to Mr. Adams for his years of service as Edgefield County Administrator (May 1995- September 2006). Mr. Adams thanked council and everyone for the opportunity to serve in the administrator capacity.

#### **Interim Administrator**

Motion was made by Chairman Kneece, seconded by Councilman Kitchens, to appoint Barbara Stark as interim administrator until the administrator position is filled. Motion carried unanimously.

**EDGEFIELD COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**Minutes**  
**September 5, 2006**

**Claims approved as follows:**

**A. PAYROLL: 7/31/06 thru 8/13/06**

Regular.....\$202,864.15

**PAYROLL: 8/14/06 thru 8/27/06**

Regular.....\$201,077.08

**B. General Operating.....\$550,664.56**

There being no further business, Councilman Dorn made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Hudson. Motion carried unanimously.

\_\_\_\_\_  
C. Monroe Kneece, Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Willie C. Bright, Vice Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Norman Dorn, Councilman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Joel D. Hudson, Councilman

\_\_\_\_\_  
B. Everette Kitchens, Councilman

ATTEST

\_\_\_\_\_  
Barbara R. Stark, Clerk to Council